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12 May 2010

Mrs Caroline Reed
Frederick Natrass Primary School
Darlington Lane
Norton
Stockton-on-Tees
TS20 1BZ

Dear Mrs Reed

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 11 May 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information you provided before and during my visit. Please forward my thanks to your Chair of Governors and to the local authority officer for meeting with me and to the pupils for their help during the visit.

Since the last inspection the school has restructured its middle leadership roles, although some posts are temporary pending permanent appointments. Partnership support from Mandale Mill Primary School is helping to develop leadership capacity.

As a result of the inspection on 15 and 16 October 2009, the school was asked to raise pupils' attainment and secure better achievement in English and mathematics; improve the quality of teaching, particularly through better use of assessment information, the use of targets and by advocating more active learning; raise attendance levels and ensure that middle leaders are more effective in promoting better learning and achievement.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.

In the lessons seen, teaching was mostly satisfactory, although some was good. Better use of assessment and tracking evidence is now apparent with teachers having access to more accurate information about how well pupils are progressing and by identifying those at risk of underachieving. The use of this information is resulting in better preparation of lessons overall, although it remains of variable quality between classes. While teachers' planning takes more account of the respective needs of individuals and groups of pupils, it is more effective in driving learning in some year groups than in others. In Year 6, for example, careful and



precise lesson planning is resulting in activities which build successfully on pupils' prior learning and results in good progress. In Year 1 assessment evidence is used well to build upon pupils' good progress and experiences in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In all other classes, pupils' progress is satisfactory. Assessment information is also used effectively to set challenging targets for pupils and to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve. The majority of pupils know their targets, although some are uncertain about how to reach them because not all teachers provide them with clear feedback about how to improve their work.

Effective work to promote better attendance has resulted in reduced absence levels and these are now broadly average. This is aligned to a significant fall in the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

The roles of middle leaders are now better defined, although the need to make recent and temporary appointments has limited their impact on raising standards. Nonetheless, there is greater clarity about the work of middle leaders and this is suitably focused on improving teaching and learning with greater emphasis given to tracking pupils' progress.

The local authority's statement of action offers a clear strategy for improvement and fulfils requirements. Support for the school is good and well considered. This has included additional training for staff, support from consultants and regular and searching checks on the school's progress. This work is strengthening the school's capacity to address the areas for improvement.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson
Her Majesty's Inspector